



Thurston County:

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Scope of Assistance:

The kickoff meeting with Thurston County occurred on June 27, 2005. Mr. Mark Swartout of Thurston County assembled a very knowledgeable group that included the Thurston County Fire Marshal, planners and engineers from the Thurston County Development Services Department, and the cities of Lacey and Tumwater.

At that meeting, Thurston County staff asked the consultant team to review an extensive list of code citations, including several new proposed ordinances. Because Thurston County was one of the earlier communities that we worked with, prioritizing the effort to something reasonable, took considerable effort. The following are the areas of emphasis that staff directed the consultant team to pursue:

- Draft Stormwater Management Manual
- Public Works Standards
- Open Space Standards
- Forest Practices
- Draft Critical Areas Regulations

This direction resulted in the preparation of the following work products:

- Preparation of revisions to Draft Stormwater Management Manual to integrate LID
- Preparation of a new Landscaping and Native Vegetation Retention chapter
- Recommendations on modifications to Forest Practices standards to provide for tree retention for Class IV Conversions
- Review of impervious surface and other bulk/dimensional requirements from the Thurston County zoning code

Findings and Observations:

The Thurston County Code generally contains very few impediments to the implementation of LID. The consultant team's review of both existing and proposed regulations found little that would preclude the use of LID.

For the purposes of LID, clustering is a good tool to reduce impervious surfaces by confining the building envelope and to allow the preservation of native forest areas. The existing Planned Rural Residential Development standards do not refer to preservation of native open space as a justification for clustering. The consultant team recommends that native forest areas be preserved as open space areas.

In the course of reviewing Thurston County's zoning and subdivision regulations, the consultant team found that the prescriptive requirements for passive open space were substantially less than many

Western Washington jurisdictions. As a result, a new native vegetation and open space retention chapter was prepared for the county code that specifies standards for open space and native vegetation retention by zone.